

STUDY OF SUICIDE CAUSES.

POVERTY NOT THE LEADING REASON FOR SELF-DESTRUCTION.

Conclusions Drawn by a Charity Organization After Investigating Forty-three Cases of Attempted Suicide—Mental Derangement is the Chief Cause.

That poverty plays a small part in leading persons to attempt suicide, and that mental derangement, either temporary or permanent, is the chief reason, is the opinion advanced by Orlando F. Lewis of the Joint Application Bureau of the Charity Organization Society, which recently made a special study of forty-three cases as reported at Bellevue Hospital. Mr. Lewis suggests that there may be a wide field for charitable work in visiting persons who report themselves in need of assistance.

The result of the investigation is given by Mr. Lewis in the current issue of *Charities*. The arrangement made by the Bellevue authorities was that the bureau should be notified when a person who had attempted suicide was brought to the prison ward. The observations were conducted between April 21 and September 17 last. As to how it was done Mr. Lewis says:

The physician in charge of the ward was first consulted by the visitor, and the method of self-destruction learned, with such other data as the hospital authorities had secured. If the physical condition of the patient permitted, an interview was held, the nature of the being approached from the standpoint of the friendly visitor. While assistance from the bureau was always offered, no probing into the patient's life was done and few details were asked on account of the patient's mental condition. The emphasis was laid upon the fact that the visitor was there as a friend in a time of need. As a rule the patients expressed gratitude for the interest and sympathy shown, and they were glad to call at the bureau after their discharge. In practically all cases the name and address of the bureau were left with the patient or the physician, and the visitor became known to the authorities in charge of the prison ward. The nurses and keepers showed a personal interest in the cases, assuring the visitor that upon the patient's dismissal they would advise him or her of any further developments.

In spite of this invitation, Mr. Lewis says, not one of the forty-three persons applied at the bureau after discharge.

"A reasonable explanation," says Mr. Lewis, "is that the majority of the patients were from the self-supporting class. Almost never, so far as the visitor could ascertain, were the patients from the class known as 'down and out'."

It was impossible to learn whether all the forty-three persons had friends or relatives who could help them, but in four or five instances the relatives or friends or relatives were visited, it is stated, and the results they could give for the patient. As to the causes of the suicides, Mr. Lewis says that the statement that a very small part in leading persons to attempt suicide in only two cases was the attempt directly traced to poverty; in four cases the patient had been out of work for employment, but not out of the city, and in one case the attempt, hysteria, more or less violent insanity and alcoholism seemed to cause the attempts in thirteen cases; excessive jealousy in three cases; in five cases the cause was given as the attempt was accidental; in one case somnambulism was given as cause; one woman was driven to attempt self-destruction by her husband's loose life, illness caused her to attempt it; four women, confined by their immoral life had become too shameful and difficult to endure.

Poison seemed to be the favorite method, perhaps because easily obtained and supposedly quick in action. Three persons sought to end their lives in this manner. Ten persons were reported to have tried gas poisoning, but in several instances it was changed to the method of hanging, the gas being blown out by the opening of a door or window while the person was asleep. Six persons attempted suicide by submersion, four by shooting, four by hanging, and one by the use of a knife. From windows, one threw himself before a street car, and in two cases the method of attack was unknown.

Out of the forty-three cases eleven stated that one day in Bellevue, six but two days and in five cases the patient was in the hospital for several weeks. Seventeen were sent to court and the bureau lost track of them; five went back to work, and in one case the patient was put in a psychiatric ward, and the rest were still at Bellevue when the investigation was closed. Not one of the forty-three persons reported that he had attempted suicide because he had sought work for a long time and failed. In regard to the results shown Mr. Lewis says:

"This effort to render aid to would-be suicides suggested that a much more extended study of would-be suicides in the various private and public hospitals of the city could well be undertaken. While certain conclusions are suggested by the present investigation, the results are not of a nature to justify a final opinion. Tentatively we may feel that poverty plays little direct part in causing attempts at suicide, and that the study of the cases would lead to the advice or aid from a charitable society after leaving the hospital."

The attempts at suicide reported from Bellevue seem to have been of the temporary, temporary or permanent, in which alcohol plays a prominent part. When there are relatives or friends in the city they seem ready to aid the patient on leaving the hospital, and the results of the study suggest that a charitable society can generally become cognizant of them.

Mr. Lewis suggests that there may be another way of trying to reach people who are in the city, and that the study of the cases would lead to the advice or aid from a charitable society after leaving the hospital."

"I think that you are correct," he says, "that the causes that lead to attempts at suicide are not such generally that a charitable society is likely to be cognizant of them. Still, I can see, in the cases given, that the causes are not such generally that a charitable society is likely to be cognizant of them. Still, I can see, in the cases given, that the causes are not such generally that a charitable society is likely to be cognizant of them."

APRISONER WHILE HE ACTED.
Donald Heath Finished Out His Part Before Going to Jail.
Donald Heath, an actor in the "In New York Town" company, was going on for the last act of the show at the American Theatre last night when Detective Livingston of the Central Office came to his dressing room and told the actor he was under arrest, charged with grand larceny. Heath had his makeup on and asked to be allowed to finish the act.

To this the detective consented. Heath got in communication with Julius Hentzer of 50 West 125th street. Magistrate Whitman was called from his home by the latter and consented to take bail from Hentzer when the prisoner was taken to the West Twenty-seventh street police station. Inspector McLaughlin received a telegram last night saying that Heath was wanted in Chicago for the larceny of \$375. This caused his arrest.

OTTO KELSEY'S RECEIVERSHIP.

His Accounts Settled With \$2,213 That His Attorney Failed to Account For.

ALBANY, April 13.—Russell S. Johnson of New York, who was a partner of ex-Judge G. D. B. Haabrock and who, with Judge Haabrock, was appointed attorney for Otto Kelsey, receiver of the Manhattan Fire Insurance Company, appeared before Justice Fitts at Special Term to-day with an application to surcharge the accounts of Otto Kelsey of \$2,213.50, representing assets from Virginia, which, it is alleged, he failed to account for to Mr. Kelsey when the accounting of the receivership was made. The discrepancy was discovered by Deputy Attorney-General Mott, who appeared to-day and offered no objection to Mr. Johnson's motion. Alfred Hayes, attorney for Edward P. Ward, who succeeded Mr. Kelsey in the receivership, was also present.

Judge Haabrock was present in the interest of Mr. Kelsey and himself. He first read an affidavit from Mr. Kelsey in which the former receiver asserted that he did not know of the \$2,213.50 until April 11, when he was notified by the Attorney-General. He pointed out that he had had no official duty to perform since the receivership, and that therefore he had been obliged to rely upon his clerks, employees and attorneys for such things as he believed when he appointed Mr. Johnson that his character and standing warranted absolute confidence.

Judge Haabrock then read an affidavit of his own, in which he showed that he had had nothing to do with the receivership after its termination from the time he went on the bench, except on a few occasions when he appeared in court for Mr. Johnson, his former partner. He declared that Mr. Johnson had been honest, prudent and faithful. He said that he himself had had no knowledge of or participation in the making of Mr. Kelsey's accounts, and that the matter was entirely in the hands of Russell S. Johnson, and he said he submitted the affidavit solely as a protection of his own private interests.

Justice Fitts granted the order surcharging the estate with the \$2,213.50, with interest at five per cent, and the receiver became known to the authorities in charge of the prison ward. The nurses and keepers showed a personal interest in the cases, assuring the visitor that upon the patient's dismissal they would advise him or her of any further developments.

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CHANGES IN CORNELL CREWS.

VARSITY BOAT IN UNSETTLED CONDITION.

Cornell's Varsity Boat Crew, which has been in the hands of the Cornell Athletic Union since the departure of the Cornell crew, is in a state of uncertainty as to whether it will be reorganized or not.

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STATE POLICE FOR AUTOS.

NOVEL PLAN SUGGESTED IN CON- NECTICUT.

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PLANS FOR POLO MEETING.

Delegates on Tuesday Night May Vote on Proposed Changes to West.

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REAL ESTATE FOR SALE.

WESTCHESTER COUNTY.

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